A

# SERMON

Preach'd in the

Pariſh Church of St. *Anne*, *Dublin*:

*January*, the 19*th*. 1723-24.

At the *Annual Meeting* of the CHILDREN

Educated in the

# Charity-Schools

IN

# *DUBLIN.*

By *TIMOTHY* LORD BISHOP of *Kilmore* and *Ardagh*.

*Publiſh'd at the Requeſt of the Gentlemen concern'd in promoting that* CHARITY.

*DUBLIN*:
Printed for *John Hyde*, Bookſeller in *Dame-ſtreet*,
1723-24.

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Printed for John Exshaw, Bookseller in Dame-Street,
1754.

## Hebrews the XIII. 16.

*But to do Good, and to communicate, forget not; for with ſuch Sacrifice God is well pleaſed.*

HE divine Author of this Epiſtle having ſhewn that the Sacrifices under the Law of *Moſes* were weak and inſufficient to procure the Pardon of our Sins, and to purge our Conſciences from the Guilt of them, and that they were ordained chiefly to be Types and Repreſentations of that great Sacrifice of himſelf, which our bleſſed Lord offer'd upon the Croſs for our Redemption, and therefore ſince that compleat Sacrifice was once offer'd, were of courſe aboliſh'd and no longer pleaſing to God: He does, in the 15*th. ver.* of this *Chap.* and in my Text, point out what Sacrifices we Chriſtians are now oblig'd to offer, inſtead of thoſe which God commanded by *Moſes.*

And *Firſt*, He mentions that of Praiſe to God, the Fruit of our Lips, which is a ſpiritual and much more reaſonable Service, than that of the Fruits of the Earth, or the Fleſh of Bullocks, Goats, or Calves.

And indeed the Sacrifice of Praiſe was even under the Law, held in much higher Eſteem with God, when it proceeded from an honeſt and thankful Heart, than all other Offerings how coſtly and expenſive ſoever they were. This the *Pſalmiſt* has fully expreſs'd in the 50*th. Pſal.* in which, after God had declared his Right and Property in all the Creatures that were offer'd to him, and alſo his being in no Want of them: *Ver.* 10. *For every Beaſt in the Forreſt is mine, and the Cattle upon a thouſand Hills,* and *ver.* 13.

*Will I eat the Fleſh of Bulls or drink the Blood of Goats?* He directs what Offering he chiefly requires, *ver.* 14. *Offer unto God Thankſgiving.*

But leaſt we ſhould think that now under the Goſpel, no other Sacrifices were expected from us in our Worſhip of God than the fruits of our Lips; that when we had offered in publick and in private our Thanks to God for all his Goodneſs to us, we had paid him all the Service he expected from us: The ſacred Pen-man joins to this, another Kind of Sacrifice which we are bound not to neglect or forget, that is the *doing Good and Communicating*, or diſtributing out of that Portion of the good Things of this World which God has beſtowed on us to our poor Brethren, and ſo ſupplying their Wants and Neceſſities: And that we might be fully convinc'd how much our heavenly Father was concern'd in our Performance of Acts of Charity to our Neighbour, as well as in our Praiſes which are directly offer'd up to him; he particularly declares to us that they alſo are Sacrifices which are acceptable to God.

*But to do Good, and to communicate, forget not: For with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.*

In my Diſcourſe on theſe Words, I ſhall, *Firſt*, ſet before you the Nature and Extent of theſe Duties of *doing Good, and Communicating.*

*2dly*, I ſhall ſhew how properly and juſtly theſe Duties may be called *Sacrifices with which God is well pleaſed.*

*3dly*, I ſhall ſhew the Force of the Apoſtle's Argument to move us to the Performance of them: And

*Laſtly*, I ſhall apply the whole to the preſent Occaſion.

And *Firſt*, I am to explain the Nature and Extent of thoſe Duties of *doing Good and Communicating.*

To do good in general, ſignifies to perform all Acts that are of Benefit to our Neighbour, in that large Senſe in which our bleſſed Lord has explain'd it; that is, to all Mankind without any Regard to Difference of Religion, Nation or Intereſt. In the preſent State of Things in this World, no

no Man can live by himſelf, without Aſſiſtance from others, which makes it neceſſary for Men to be join'd together in Society for their mutual Preſervation and Subſiſtance; and this lays an Obligation upon every Man to perform all thoſe good Offices which are call'd ſocial Virtues, by which Societies are maintain'd: And all theſe are comprehended under this general Expreſſion of *doing Good*. Such are the promoting our Neighbours Welfare, the helping him in Caſes of Difficulty, the protecting him in Time of Danger, the delivering him from the Evils he lies under: And in this Senſe it is ſaid of our bleſſed Saviour, that he went about *doing Good*.

But becauſe in this World, far the greateſt Part of Mankind have ſo ſmall a Portion of the good Things of this World allotted to them, that oftentimes they want the Neceſſaries, as well as Comforts of Life. The Apoſtle adds to this general Expreſſion of *doing Good* another, that particularly relates to them, *viz. to communicate*, that is, to relieve the Wants of our poor Brethren, by contributing to them ſome Part of the Subſtance God has afforded us, in Proportion to our Abilities, and their Neceſſities.

The Rich are bound to give more plentifully, and to extend their Charity to greater Numbers; and they who do not abound, but yet have enough to ſupport themſelves and Families in that State of Life God's Providence has placed them, ought to ſpare ſomething, how ſmall ſoever it be, to their poor Neighbour; and as the Neceſſities of the Poor, whether relating to their Mind or Bodies, are more urgent, ſo they more loudly call, and conſequently lay a greater Obligation on all who are able to help them, to contribute towards their Relief. And thus I have briefly explained the Nature and Extent of the Duties recommended in my Text.

I paſs on *Secondly*, to ſhew how juſtly theſe may be call'd *Sacrifices with which God is well pleaſed*.

Sacrifices were Things ſet apart for God's Uſe, and offer'd up for his Honour. Whatever Part then of our Goods we diſtribute for his Honour, may juſtly be ſaid to be offer'd

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to himſelf, and that our Acts of Charity tend to his Honour, appears from hence, that nothing ſo much juſtifies his Providence in ſuffering the great Numbers of Poor in the World, than our ready Obedience to his Commands for the Relief of them.

In this preſent State of Life, we find a great Inequality in the Diſtribution of the Things of this World. Abundance and Wealth are but in a few Hands; far the greateſt Part of Mankind, have nothing but what they get by their own Labour, and with that too, are not able to gain more, than what will ſubſiſt them but for a ſhort Time; and yet have equally Bodies that muſt be fed and clothed, and Minds which ought to be inſtructed in the Knowledge of Things relating to this World, and that which is to come. And ſuch an unequal Diviſion of Things ſeems to be abſolutely neceſſary; for the Wants of the Body raiſing in Men ſtrong Deſires and Appetites, which are ſcarce to be kept within Bounds by the Law of Nature, would give Occaſion to ſuch Quarrels and Contentions about the Neceſſaries of Life, that were it not for the Inſtitution of Government and Laws, the World would be in a continual State of War, and Men would be daily deſtroying one another.

Now Government cannot be maintain'd, nor Laws duly executed, without ſuch a Diſtribution of Things as may ſet ſome Men above, and give them Authority over others, that ſo they who have the Wealth, and conſequently the Power in their Hands, may be able to reſtrain the unruly Paſſions of the Multitude, by the Execution of ſuch Laws as are neceſſary for the Preſervation of the Society wherein they live.

And it being alſo neceſſary that all Men ſhould be inſtructed in their Duty both to God and Man, in Order to their living well here, and their attaining everlaſting Happineſs hereafter. This cannot be effected unleſs ſome Perſons were ſet apart for this Work which neceſſarily takes up their chief Care and Thoughts.

Since then Magiſtrates are neceſſary in every Society, and Miniſters in all Chriſtian Societies, and thoſe Offices could

could not be duly executed, if all Men were put upon an equal Foot: An Inequality among Men appears to be unavoidable on this Account. But beſides, they who perform theſe Offices, have the ſame Neceſſities of Nature to be ſupplied, with the reſt of their Fellow-creatures: But this Supply could not be made, unleſs the greateſt Part of Mankind were employ'd in ſuch Works as we call the Drudgery of the World, which they would by no Means ſubmit to unleſs compell'd by their own Wants: So that many of the moſt laborious Works, and of the loweſt Offices of Life, which are ſo uſeful, that Mankind could not with any Comfort ſubſiſt without them, would be left undone, could thoſe that are employ'd in them be ſupplied any other Way with what is neceſſary for themſelves.

To theſe Conſiderations I might add, that God by dividing the World into Rich and Poor, beſtows Rewards and Puniſhments in this Life. The Honeſt and Induſtrious are encourag'd in their Labours by the Proſpect of lawful Gain: Strait Circumſtances, put Men of good Abilities, upon ingenious Inventions and Arts of great Uſe to Mankind, for which they are amply rewarded. On the other Hand, thoſe who are ſlothful and idle, ſink into Poverty as a juſt Puniſhment for their being uſeleſs Burthens to the Country they live in.

We ſee then the Wiſdom of God's Providence in this unequal Diſtribution of the Things of this World; in which there occurs to us but one Difficulty, and that is the unavoidable Wants of ſuch as have not Health or Strength enough to ſupply themſelves with the Neceſſaries of Life, or of thoſe who have ſuch numerous Families, as makes it impoſſible for them with their utmoſt Labour, to afford them ſufficient Means for the Support of their Bodies, or the Inſtruction of their Minds. This God out of his infinite Goodneſs hath made up, by obliging all who are Rich, or have any thing to ſpare, to ſupply what is wanting to their poor Brethren by Acts of Charity, which they are bound to do, not only for the Sake of thoſe whom they relieve, but in Order to vindicate God's Honour in his Diſpoſal of Things here below, that ſo no Part of Mankind may juſtly complain that they are hardly dealt

dealt with, or neglected by him, but may have cauſe to bleſs his holy Name, that what is wanting in their Circumſtances, is ſupplied by the Liberality of thoſe, to whom God has beſtowed for that, as well as other wiſe Ends, more Abundance.

The due Performance of Acts of Charity tending ſo much to God's Honour; whatever we give to our poor Brethren, may very properly be ſaid to be offer'd to him; and indeed we find in many Places of Scripture, that by what we do of this Kind, we truly honour him, and that he takes it as done to himſelf. Thus we read *Prov.* xiv. 13. *He who oppreſſeth the Poor reproacheth his Maker, but he who honoureth him, has Mercy on the Poor.* As they who by Oppreſſion, make the Condition of the Poor more hard and miſerable, caſt a Reproach on God as if he had wholly neglected his Creatures; ſo on the other Hand, he who has any Regard for God's Honour, and ſeeks that his Name may be glorified for his Goodneſs by all Mankind, hath Mercy on the Poor, and endeavours to make their Paſſage through the World more tolerable and eaſie,

But God does not only graciouſly accept our Charity to the poor, as an Offering or Gift to himſelf, but declares himſelf our Debtor on that Account. *Prov.* xix. 17. *He that hath Pity on the Poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* And the Author of this Epiſtle tells the *Hebrews*, Heb. vi. 10. *That God is not unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which you have ſhew'd towards his Name, in that ye have miniſtred unto the Saints, and do miniſter.*

Thus the great God of Heaven, to whom we owe all we poſſeſs and enjoy, graciouſly condeſcends to ſet to his own Account, whatever we beſtow on our poor Brethren. And accordingly we find by the Repreſentations which our bleſſed Lord has made of the laſt Judgment, how highly every Act of Charity will be rewarded in the laſt Day, with this Reaſon given for it by the Judge of the whole World. *In as much as ye have done it unto the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

If then the Performance of theſe Duties of *doing Good, and communicating to the Poor*, tend ſo much to God's Honour, and are by him acknowledged to be done to himſelf, it follows that no Offices of Piety can have a more juſt title to be call'd Sacrifices than theſe have, which was the *Second* Particular I propoſed to make evident. I proceed *Thirdly, To ſhew the Force of the Apoſtle's Argument to move us to the Performance of them.*

Mankind by the Light of Nature being convinced of the Being of God, of his governing the World, and of his beſtowing on his Creatures all the good Things they enjoy: And being alſo conſcious to themſelves, that in many Inſtances, they tranſgreſs'd his Laws and deſerv'd Puniſhment; were naturally led to offer up Sacrifices to God, of the Fruits of the Earth, or the Product of their Cattle, which was the chief Riches in thoſe Times.

An early Inſtance we have of this, in the Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*: Now tho' theſe Offerings were differently accepted of by God, as the Offerers were more or leſs worthy of his Favour, (as we find by his accepting *Abel*'s Sacrifice when he rejected *Cain*'s:) yet not only the Heathen World who were Idolaters, but even the Children of *Iſrael* who worſhipped the true God, in offering up thoſe Sacrifices which he had appointed in the Law of *Moſes*; looked upon them as the higheſt Acts of Religion, if they were accompanied with Sincerity of Heart, and that becauſe they thought God was more immediately concern'd in the Performance of them; many of the living Creatures that were ſacrificed being wholly offer'd up to him, as in the Burnt-offerings, and the moſt choice Parts of them, in the other Kinds of Sacrifices.

And now ſince the Offering our bleſſed Lord made of his own Body upon the Croſs, all *Jewiſh* Sacrifices are aboliſhed; the Sacrifices of *Praiſe* and *Thanksgiving* which ſucceed them being immediately offer'd to God, as an Acknowledgment of our grateful Senſe of his Goodneſs to us, and eſpecially that ſolemn Act of *Thanksgiving*, in which we commemorate *Chriſt*'s Sacrifice for us and the whole

World in the *Lord's Supper*, are eſteemed as the higheſt Acts of God's Worſhip under the Goſpel.

The Author of this Epiſtle had good Reaſon then to recommend to us the doing Good and Communicating to our poor Brethren, by calling them *Sacrifices well pleaſing to God*, aſſuring us by this, that God accepts of our Performance of theſe Duties with the ſame gracious Hand that he does of the moſt ſolemn Offices of Adoration paid to himſelf. And indeed from the early Times of Chriſtianity, in the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, the Communicants were obliged to join to their Prayers and Praiſes, Alms and Oblations for the Relief of their poor Brethren; without which, that holy Office wou'd bemaim'd and imperfect.

From all which it plainly appears that our Acts of Charity are Acts of Piety, and are accounted as Offerings not ſo much to our Brethren as to God himſelf. And therefore all thoſe Obligations which lie upon us to perform our Duty towards God in Acts of Piety, have equal Force to bind us to the Practice of theſe Duties towards our Neighbour in Acts of Charity. I ſhall mention the chief of theſe Obligations which will more fully ſhew the Force of the Apoſtle's Argument in my Text.

And *Firſt*, ſince God requires the Performance of theſe Duties at our Hands, declaring that he looks upon them as done to himſelf, we are bound in Juſtice not to forget them.

All the good Things we poſſeſs in this World, whether they came to us by Inheritance, or we have gotten them by our own Labour and Induſtry, we muſt own them to be the Gift of God. It is to his good Providence we owe all the Succeſs we have had in our Affairs, even all our Proſperity and Plenty. How many have we ſeen of good Capacities and Abilities who have not been wanting in Diligence and Care to raiſe and enrich themſelves, and yet have not been able in the Courſe of a long Life to advance one Step higher, than when they firſt ſet out in the World; but have found by Experience what the *Pſalmiſt* has ſaid long ago: *That without God's Bleſſing it hath been in vain for them to have riſen up early, to have ſat up late, and to have eaten the Bread of Sorrows.*

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They therefore that proſper in the World, and ſo are diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of their Brethren, muſt acknowlege that all this Difference in their Conditions and Circumſtances is owing not to themſelves, but to God, who has granted to them, what he has thought fit to deny to others. He then remains the ſole Lord and Proprietor of all Things, and they are His not ours; nor has he given away the Property of them, but has committed them into the Hand of the Rich as his Stewards, who muſt hereafter expect to give an Account of what they have receiv'd, and how they have diſpos'd of it. So that they to whom God has given ſuch a Portion of good Things, as exceed what will ſupply their own Wants, are in ſtrict Juſtice bound to pay ſome Part of it as an Acknowledgment to him who is the Lord of all. And ſince he is all-ſufficient, and can want nothing for himſelf, ſo that our Goodneſs cannot, as the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſeth it, *extend to him*; it ought certainly to extend to our poor Brethren upon Earth, whom he has appointed to receive our Offerings, and more eſpecially ſince he has been graciouſly pleas'd to declare that he looks not on what we give to the Poor ſo much as a Payment of our juſt Debts to him, but rather makes himſelf become our Debtor on that Account. We muſt be unjuſt in the higheſt Degree, if after all this, we forget to pay what is on ſo many Accounts due from us. Nor are we only bound in Juſtice but in Gratitude alſo to be forward, in paying our Acknowledgments to God our great Benefactor. We can claim no manner of Right in Reſpect to God of any of the Things we poſſeſs, they are all his Gifts which if he had thought fit to beſtow on others, we had had no Colour for Complaint. In this Senſe it is undoubtedly true what St. *Paul* has ſaid, *Rom.* ix. 21. *That the Potter has Power over the Clay of the ſame Lump to make one Veſſel unto Honour, and another unto Diſhonour. So that the Thing form'd cannot ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* No Man can ſay to God why haſt thou brought me into the World in a low Condition, why haſt thou made me poor? And therefore they that have Plenty, are under the higheſt Obligation to ſhew their Gratitude to their boun-

tiful Lord and Maſter, and make chearful Returns, of whatſoever he demand of them.

If our earthly Parents, after they had carefully brought us up and given us our Portion, which by our own Induſtry we had ſo much improv'd as to make a plentiful Fortune, ſhould after this, themſelves fall to Decay; ſhould not we think ourſelves under the ſtrongeſt Ties of Gratitude to ſupply their Wants and to preſerve them from the Contempt and Hardſhips of a low Condition? How much more ought we to ſhew ourſelves grateful to our heavenly Father, to whom it is wholly to be aſcribed that our Parents had Abilities, and Hearts to ſet us up in the World!

If God then, who tho' he can want nothing himſelf that we can give him, has made our poor Brethren his Repreſentatives on Earth to receive all the Offerings of a grateful Mind; and thus has given Opportunities to us to ſhew our Thankfulneſs to him for all his Benefits, in Actions as well as Expreſſions; certainly we ought with Joy and Chearfulneſs to embrace this Way of paying our moſt bounden Duty to him. In vain muſt we think it, to come into his Houſe and offer to him the Praiſes of our Lips, if we refuſe to become his Inſtruments in providing for our poor Brother whom he has left to our Care.

If the Heathen World look'd upon themſelves as bound to offer coſtly Sacrifices to them they thought to be their Gods, and ſpar'd no Expence to ſhew the grateful Senſe of the Benefits that they imagin'd they receiv'd from them: If the *Iſraelites*, the Worſhippers of the true God, were oblig'd to make Journeys Thrice a Year to *Jeruſalem*, and not to appear before the Lord empty, but to make their Offering to the Lord of the beſt of the Things they poſſeſs'd: What are we Chriſtians bound to do, who are freed from that heavy Yoke, and inſtead of it, are bound to pay a ſpiritual and reaſonable Service? I ſay what Obligation do we lie under to be liberal and bountiful to our poor Brother? This being the chief Return requir'd of us under the Goſpel that can put us to any Expence. If we refuſe to do this for God, all our Praiſes of him are meer Words. If we will not part with any thing

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to vindicate his Honour, to glorifie his Name, our moſt exalted Devotions are but a Mockery of him.

How ſhould we think ourſelves abus'd by any one to whom we had ſhewn great Kindneſs, if he were tedious in making great Profeſſions of his Gratitude, and yet could not be brought to do us or our Friends a Service that would coſt him any thing! Would not all his flattering Speeches increaſe our Anger againſt him for his Ingratitude! And can we think our heavenly Father will be pleas'd with our loudly ſetting forth his Praiſes, when at the ſame time, we keep our Purſes ſhut up, and will part with nothing for his Sake? No certainly: If therefore we would be thought grateful to God for his Mercies; let it appear that we are ſo, not by our Words only, but by our good Works alſo.

*Thirdly*, It is a Part of Piety, in offering Sacrifices to God, to pray to him for what we ſtand in need of, both for our Souls and Bodies; but theſe will not be accepted without our Alms: For can we expect that God will hear us if we be deaf to him: Will he be prevail'd with to add to our Store, when at his Command we refuſe to ſpare a ſmall Part of it?

If we can ſuppoſe that we have made our Condition in this World ſo ſure, that no Change can happen to us: If we need no longer to be under the Dependance on God's Providence, but can ſet up for ourſelves, and ſo have nothing more to ask of him; then it might be Time to forget what our great Benefactor has done for us: For then it is that worldly Men forget the Favours of their Friends here, when once they ceaſe to ſtand in need of their Aſſiſtance, or their Friends want Ability to help them. But he can have no Piety toward God, that can imagin himſelf got above depending on his Providence. No, a pious Man knows that as ſoon as ever God hides his Face from him, he and all his Subſtance in the World is gone, and therefore finds it neceſſary to call daily upon God for the Continuance of his Bleſſing. But with what Confidence can any one ask of God, who refuſeth to give what is ſo ſtrictly requir'd of him? *Whoſo ſtoppeth his Ears at the Cry of the Poor, he alſo ſhall cry him-*

*himſelf, but ſhall not be heard,* ſaith the wiſe Man, *Prov.* xxi. 13.

We want Pardon every Day for our daily Sins: But can we expect it from God, by our moſt earneſt Prayers, without Charity? Will our Faſting, and other Acts of Mortification, appeaſe his Anger againſt us; will they move him to have Mercy on us, when all this Time, we ſhut up our Bowels of Compaſſion to our poor Brother; will he freely forgive us Talents upon our falling down to him, when we cannot be prevail'd on to forgive or beſtow on our Brother a few Pence? Can we pretend to mortify our Affections to the World, and yet at the ſame Time ſhew that it has got ſuch faſt Hold on us, that we are reſolv'd not to ſpare the leaſt Part of it for God or our our Souls? We may indeed chooſe this frugal Way of Faſting, and put a Cheat on our own Conſciences, but we muſt not think to prevail on God for our Pardon by ſuch hypocritical Performances. No, God has told us plainly, that this Kind of Faſt he has not choſen; as we may find *Iſa.* lviii. 5. and at the ſame Time, declared the moſt proper Way of Faſting to attain his Mercy and Favour, *ver.* 8. *Is it not to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that are caſt out to thy Houſe; when thou ſeeſt the Naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyſelf from thy own Fleſh!* *Then,* as it is in the *9th. Verſe, ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer: Thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay here I am.*

*Fourthly,* Sacrifices, both under the Law of Nature, and of that of *Moſes,* were always look'd upon as outward Acts of Faith in God, of Love and Fear of him; and whoever liv'd in a conſtant Neglect of them, was juſtly look'd on as one who had no Faith of God, and neither lov'd nor fear'd him: And I cannot ſee how an uncharitable Man can avoid theſe Imputations: For how can he be ſaid to have Faith in God, or to put any Confidence in him, who will not ſpare any Part of his worldly Good for God's Sake! 'Tis plain his Truſt is in the World, *in Riches, and not in the Living God:* He vainly imagines that *his Life conſiſteth in the Abundance of the Things which he poſſeſſeth,* and therefore, 'tis Death

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to him to part with any of it: His Treaſure is in this World, and here is his Heart alſo, which is ſo fully poſſeſs'd with it, that there is no Room left for the Love of God to enter in: His Cares and Fears center here, when the Fear of God is not in all his Thoughts.

Whereas a truly pious Man has that Faith and Truſt in God, that he is confident that what he lays out in Charity, will be ſo far from waſting his Eſtate, that it will be a Means, through the Bleſſing of God, to increaſe it, and ſo lays up in Store not only for this World, *but alſo a good Foundation for the Time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal Life.* His Treaſure being laid up in Heaven, and his Heart being fix'd upon it, in Compariſon of that he deſpiſeth all earthly Treaſure; ſo that nothing hinders the Love of God from being richly ſhed abroad in his Heart, which powerfully moves him, as he has Opportunity, to ſhew his Love to his Brother alſo. His chief Care is to pleaſe God, and his greateſt Fear is to offend him; and therefore he will readily part with what he has in this World, rather than by with-holding it, incur the Danger of loſing his Favour. He knows that Riches cannot make him happy who lies under God's Diſpleaſure, which he looking upon as the greateſt of Evils, will think no Expence too much to ſecure himſelf from it: Hence he is much more ſollicitous to keep the Commandments of God, than to preſerve or increaſe *his Store of Gold and precious Stones.*

And thus I have at large ſhewn the Force of the Argument made uſe of in my Text, to perſwade us *to do Good, and to communicate,* to wit, *that with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.*

Sacrifices were in all Ages of the World, eſteemed as the higheſt Acts of Religion and Piety, as being immediately offer'd to God, the Lord of the whole Earth; ſo that no Argument can be offer'd more ſtrong, to move us to perform any Duty to our Neighbour, than that God looks upon it as a Sacrifice, imputing it as done to himſelf: Hence ariſe all thoſe Obligations upon us, of ſhewing by a ready Performance of theſe Duties, that we are deſirous to be juſt to

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him who is the Lord of all we poſſeſs, and grateful to our great Benefactor, that we hope he will hear our Prayers and accept our poor Services; and that our Faith and Truſt in him, our Love and Fear of him, are thoſe noble Principles which govern and direct us in the whole Courſe of our Lives.

Give me Leave now to apply what has been ſaid to the preſent Occaſion.

We are now call'd on to contribute freely towards the Inſtruction and Clothing of ſuch poor Children as have loſt their Parents, or whoſe Parents are not able to bear any Expence for their Education: For which End, many Charity Schools have been ſet up in ſeveral Pariſhes in this City; and ſome publick ſpirited Perſons have join'd themſelves in a voluntary Society, that by their united Endeavours, they might encourage, direct and aſſiſt others in promoting ſo good a Work throughout the whole Kingdom.

By the Care of this Society many excellent Rules have been form'd for the good Government and Management of theſe Schools, and at their Expence great Numbers of uſeful Books, for the Inſtruction of the Youth, both in Faith and Manners, have been diſpers'd abroad; and God has been pleas'd to bleſs their Undertakings with remarkable Succeſs: New Schools having been erected from Time to Time, and the Number of Scholars of both Sexes daily increaſing, as may be ſeen by ſeveral printed Accounts of the Riſe and Proſperity of Charity Schools in this Kingdom; and will ſoon appear more fully by a farther Account which will ſhortly be ſent to Preſs.

And now that this worthy Society may be enabled to make a greater Progreſs in the bleſſed Work they have taken upon themſelves, it is my Buſineſs at this Time to exhort you chearfully to bear a part with them in your liberal Contributions towards it. And I hope the Preſence of ſo many Children before us, will not only ſerve as a convincing Proof of the good Effects of the Care and Labour of the worthy Members of this Society, but will raiſe the good Affections of Love, Tenderneſs and Compaſſion towards theſe Objects of Charity, in all that hear me this Day.

I ſhould be unwilling while I am exciting you to this particular Act of Charity, to leſſen the Value of other Acts of the ſame Kind, ſuch as the relieving old and impotent Perſons, who while they had their Health and Strength did good Service to the Publick, but are now paſt Labour; or thoſe who from plentiful Circumſtances are fallen into Decay, and are unable to bear hard Labour: God forbid that any of theſe ſhould periſh through our Neglect. But I think I may ſay that there are ſome peculiar Circumſtances in this preſent Caſe that recommend it to our Thoughts, and make it to deſerve our ſerious Conſideration.

Not to mention that many of theſe poor Children as yet have not Strength or Skill enough to be employ'd in any Work by which they might ſupport themſelves; and on that Account are equal Objects of Charity with grown Perſons in the like Circumſtances, and that without this Care taken of them, they would be wandring up and down from Houſe to Houſe, by which they would get ſuch Habits of Idleneſs and other Vices, that when they grew up they would neither ſubmit to hard Labour, nor be fit for any honeſt Service: Whereas by this Way of Education they are in a few Years made capable of being placed out in ſome honeſt Way of Livelihood, and become as uſeful Members of the Society they live in, as many who ſet out into the World in far better Circumſtances: And that therefore this Kind of Charity moſt of all tends to the publick good in increaſing the Number of honeſt and induſtrious Perſons, which is the Strength as well as Ornament of any People: Not to mention I ſay this and many other Particulars which relate to themſelves, their Relations, their Neighbourhood and Country, all which wou'd ſhew this to be a moſt beneficial Charity: I ſhall at preſent inſiſt only on this one Particular, that theſe poor Children are by this Means well inſtructed in the Principles of our holy Religion, of which elſe, perhaps they might be as ignorant as if they had been born where the Goſpel was ſcarce ever heard of.

For have we not too many among us Chriſtians of all Denominations who for want of Inſtruction in their Youth know little more of their Religion than the Names of God and our bleſſed Saviour? And which is more to be lamented, are ſeldom or never heard to mention them, (unleſs they are reduced to Beggary) but in vain Oaths and wicked Curſes. And is not this a miſerable Caſe? I appeal to all that hear me who have had the Happineſs of a good Education, whether they do not think it one of the moſt miſerable Circumſtances of Life to grow up in Ignorance of all that is good, and whether they would not willingly part with almoſt all they had to purchaſe Knowledge if they had it not.

Now theſe poor Children before you, my Brethren, as they have begun to receive this valuable Bleſſing by your Charity, ſo they muſt depend on the Continuance of it for their farther Progreſs in it: And you may be well aſſured, that this Act of Charity of yours in their Behalf, will not fall ſhort of any of thoſe *Sacrifices with which God is well pleaſed.*

They have immortal Souls as well as we, and God ſent his Son to lay down his Life for them as he did for us, and if by our Help they be brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, they may be as capable of glorifying God here, of adorning the Goſpel of God our Saviour, of Strengthening the Intereſt of the eſtabliſhed Church, (which in this Kingdom is ſurrounded with ſo many Enemies) as any of us, and will be equally capable of being admitted together with us into the Kingdom of Heaven, and there remain everlaſting Monuments of our Charity.

This Kind of *doing Good*, is a Work of this Generation, and may be juſtly aſſign'd as one Reaſon of God's ſignal Preſervation of his true Religion among us. It has been carried on with great Succeſs in our neighbouring Kingdom: Let us then be provok'd by them, to an holy Emulation in extending our Charity this Way, in Proportion to our Abilities, that God may continue to bleſs us, and preſerve to us our happy Conſtitution in Church and State.

To conclude then, ſince we know that Charity is one of the higheſt Acts of our holy Religion, and that what we give on this Occaſion, is properly applied to God's Honour and Service, and has all the Advantages of any Sacrifice that we can offer to our heavenly Father: Let me in the Words of St. *Paul*, 2. *Cor.* ix. 7, 12. perſwade every Man to contribute towards it *not grudgingly, or of Neceſſity: For God loveth a chearful Giver. For the Adminiſtration of this Service, not only ſupplieth the Wants of theſe poor Children, but is abundant alſo by many Thankſgivings unto God.*

*Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our* Lord *Jeſus, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his Sight, through Jeſus Chriſt our* Lord: *To whom, with the Father and Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed,* &c.

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